

## September 22, 2021 Department Meeting

### Secretary of the Faculty

- Jennifer Mackenzie appointed for this academic year

### Check-in about the semester (Group discussion)

- Students are happy to be back on campus, energized, collaborative, happy to be in person
- There are many student absences, dealing with isolation requests
- Many of us have had students with Covid, some faculty members have had Covid-positive tests; many instructors feel anxiety about this
- What are we seeing in terms of students' learning in the language courses as compared to a normal semester? Some students seem to have learned a great deal of independence from the experience of quarantine, others seem to have fallen behind; Overall students seem to be doing better except for those with many absences; In 204, there are at least two students who have been hospitalized for Covid; In French, Graduate Student Instructors seem to be happy to be back, are running courses consciously in terms of group work and spacing, but we are starting to get absences for other health issues and illnesses that is pushing up absences generally; Overall, the biggest issue currently seems to be student absences; Some rooms are simply too small to provide adequate spacing; We can keep a list of inadequate classrooms; Teaching language with the masks on is difficult
- Offering Zoom option for students who are ill can be challenging, and students are starting to use the option even when they are not ill
- Offering flexibility to students around deadlines and test-taking – for as many students who need it now - is getting increasingly hard to manage

### Curriculum developments and proposals (led by Amy)

- We are submitting 6 new courses to the new curriculum this year
- We already have many courses approved in the new curriculum
- Amy reminds us that it will be increasingly more important to have courses fulfill at least one Gen Ed in the new curriculum. This is especially true for courses that fill up with difficulty.
- Underrepresented focus capacities in our department are Ethical and Civic Values and Natural Science
- A single course can fulfill up to two focus capacities + Research and Discovery
- III courses: These are large, team-taught courses by three professors in different disciplines. If that's a type of teaching that is interesting to you (interdisciplinary, collaborative, for a very large audience), please get in touch with Ellen, Amy or both to discuss that possibility.

### Administrative Changes and Updates (led by Shavon and Nefi)

- Shavon is now manager, since Logan left us last year: scheduling, staffing, hiring, fiscal management

- We have a new graduate student services person: Oliver Jones comes to us from Study Abroad
- Nefi is still with us on accounting and budget, Sheena on scheduling, Heather on publications
- Exam and quiz copies can be submitted online: <https://romsnet.web.unc.edu/faculty-resources/exam-copies-request/>
- There is a cabinet in the grad lounge where you can retrieve your exams
- We are trying to mitigate traffic coming into the main office. The cabinet is secure. The grad lounge is locked.
- Budgets: The university is in deficit. Much has been cleared up last year – cancelled positions, lack of travel – but we still have some strict spending restrictions, from the university and Dean’s office. Food cannot be purchased except for student-facing events. Even at student-facing events, only 20\$/person PER EVENT (not per meal) can be spent. The Dean’s office has asked department to re-invest trust funds given to us by donors. We pay start-up funds and other administrative stipends out of these funds. We need to start freeing up some of these funds. For questions about how to use these funds, contact Nefi. Shavon has now created a fund expiration schedule:

#### Fund Expiration Schedule

Fund Type	Fund Expiration
Start-up Funds (Department share)	5 years or once promoted to Associate Professor
Administrative Stipends	End Date of Administrative appointment
Faculty Development	End of Fiscal year (a one-year extension can be requested)
Sponsored Events	End of Fiscal year (a one-year extension can be requested)

- Other changes: travel awards will be ‘awards’ (financial aid) rather than reimbursements
- CONCUR: a new travel booking system
  - o ROMS website > Intranet > Before You Travel
  - o Concur is a glorified Expedia/Booking.com system
  - o The university has arranged a contract with an agency (World Travel) with competitive pricing on hotels and flights
  - o You need to log in to the interface to search for flights, hotels, etc.
  - o Nefi and Shavon need to be added as ‘delegates’
  - o Book at least 30 days before you travel so that there is time to review your request
  - o Can we use AirBnb still? Yes. If you were able to find one elsewhere, which is cheaper, we would need to prove that we tried to do so first through the university but found a cheaper option through AirBnb.
  - o The MLA has conference hotels. *In order to book one of those, we would need to go into Concur and prove that there are not cheaper options there.*

- Hassan wonders if outstanding funds can be taken as salary, but in that case some percentage (26%) will be used for fringe benefits
- Shavon and Nefi will be contacting individuals with outstanding balances that need to be used on a (new) deadline

#### Event announcements

- Hassan: Franco-Algerian poet visit and reading info flyer forthcoming
- Hélène: ROMS outdoor film screening, gives a lot of visibility to the department among students, advertised via email
- Tacia: Heritage Learner Pedagogy Series, last speaker is coming in October, info and flyer forthcoming
- Cristina: NC Latin American Film Festival
- Ellen: Virtual events are helping us to build broader audiences for our events – friends of the department living in the area; people with pedagogy interests – these are lists that we can keep growing and using to advertise events

#### Personnel Discussion (TT faculty)